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# Public Health Reports

Treasury Department, United States Marine-Hospital Service. Published in accordance with act of Congress approved February 15, 1893.

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NO. 1.

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## UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General, United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

### *Influenza (la grippe).*

This disease is reported by newspapers present in epidemic form in many places. In Philadelphia it is stated that 20 per cent of the school children have the disease. It is also reported as attacking many persons in New York, Washington, and of other cities. The health officials of New York and Philadelphia have taken the ground that la grippe is contagious, and recommend isolation of persons suffering with the disease, fumigation of rooms, and public vehicles—in a word, the usual precautions observed in the treatment of infectious and contagious diseases. As in the pandemic of 1889–90, la grippe seems to have started in the East, having been reported in Turkey about the middle of November, and has spread westward, following the established lines of travel.

In another part of this number of the PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS may be found abstracts from the reports of medical officers of the Marine-Hospital Service and State boards of health.

### GRIPPE.

*Circular letter addressed to medical officers, acting assistant surgeons, and sanitary inspectors of the Marine-Hospital Service, and secretaries State boards of health.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 24, 1898.

SIR: You are requested to report, as soon as practicable, whether influenza or la grippe is prevalent in your locality, giving the type of

the disease, the mortality (severity), and the treatment, sanitary and medicinal, with full statistics as far as possible.

By direction of Supervising Surgeon-General, U. S. M. H. S.

Respectfully, yours,

PRESTON H. BAILBACHE,

Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

#### ABSTRACT OF REPLIES RECEIVED.

*Alexandria, Va.*—Grippe has been prevalent for about three weeks. It is unusually contagious and generally of catarrhal type, but, except in persons of advanced years, or in neglected cases, it is not severe. Cases of croupous pneumonia with typical bronchopneumonia symptoms are quite frequent and invariably fatal.

*Berlin, Md.*—Grippe is moderately prevalent in this locality, about 20 persons in a population of 1,500 being affected. It is of mild type, with no mortality.

*Boston, Mass.*—Grippe is very prevalent in Boston and vicinity, and may be said to be epidemic. The number of cases can not be stated as reports are not required by the board of health except in case of death. Since December 1, 8 deaths have been reported, 7 of which were complicated with other diseases. During the same period, 7 cases have been admitted to the Marine Hospital for treatment and 10 have developed in the wards. The type of the disease in cases seen by myself have been mild. It appears to be mildly contagious.

*Brunswick, Ga.*—Influenza prevails in this locality in a mild type, with no mortality so far.

*Cairo, Ill.*—Grippe is prevalent, though not yet epidemic.

*Cambridge, Md.*—Grippe is generally prevalent in this locality in two distinct types, the neuralgic and the catarrhal. The mortality from the disease has been very slight. In my opinion the disease is of a highly infectious type.

*Concord, N. H.*—There are very few cases at this date, and no deaths have resulted.

*Delaware Breakwater Quarantine, Del.*—No influenza or grippe in this locality.

*Dubuque, Iowa.*—A few cases are reported of what is believed to be epidemic or contagious grippe. All are of a mild form, and the diagnosis is questionable.

*Fredericksburg, Va.*—No cases discovered in the town or vicinity.

*Georgetown, S. C.*—A few cases of a mild type have occurred in this city within the past two months.

*Jackson, Miss.*—A few cases have occurred, but there is no epidemic.

*Louisville, Ky.*—There has been an extensive epidemic of influenza throughout the State of Kentucky. It has been exceedingly mild in character, no deaths having resulted.

*Mobile, Ala.*—No cases of epidemic influenza have been reported to the health officer up to this time.

*Newbern, N. C.*—A few cases have been observed in this city. There have been no deaths. Severe colds and some cases of catarrhal pneumonia are noted.

*Philadelphia, Pa.*—The total number of deaths for the week ended December 24 was 650, an increase of 169 over the number for the previous week, and 284 over the corresponding week in the preceding year. Of these, 29 were reported as influenza and 123 as pneumonia, being an increase of influenza of 26 and of pneumonia of 47 over the previous week. For the week ended December 29 the total number of deaths is 607, of which 59 are attributed to influenza and 115 to pneumonia. Physicians are generally overworked, and whole families are prostrated. The manifestations of the disease are so varied that it has to be treated symptomatically.

*Portsmouth, N. H.*—Grippe exists in sporadic form and is of mild type, being generally neuralgic. Catarrh is slight or absent.

*Providence, R. I.*—A form of epidemic cold exists. Whether it is true epidemic influenza or grippe can not be stated. A few cases which appear to be typical are reported. There has been no perceptible increase of deaths from pulmonary diseases.

*Richmond, Va.*—A few cases in very mild form.

*Rockland, Me.*—No genuine cases of grippe. Pneumonia and bronchitis are prevalent.

*Springfield, Ill.*—There are quite a number of cases of grippe, most of them being of mild type. A few are of the most severe type. Several deaths are reported. Severe colds are prevalent.

*Smallpox in Detroit, Mich.*

DETROIT, MICH., *January 1, 1899.*

SIR: I have the honor to report 4 cases of smallpox in this city. I would request that 50 vaccine points be sent as soon as possible.

Respectfully, yours,

JOHN GODFREY,  
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

*Smallpox in Minnesota.*

ST. PAUL, MINN., *December 19, 1898.*

SIR: It becomes my duty to inform you that John Noberger, aged 27, arrived at Minneapolis, Minn., December 8, 1898, where he developed a mild case of varioloid. Came from Montana where he had been working on the railroads. Supposed origin: One of the railroad crew sick for three days, when taken suddenly from camp and information as to the nature of sickness refused to the rest of the crew.

Very truly,

H. M. BRACKEN, *Secretary.*

*Smallpox in Oklahoma Territory.*

GUTHRIE, OKLA., *December 30, 1898.*

SIR: I have to report the following additional cases of smallpox, all of which exist near the original point of infection, at Stroud: Two